

Our Lady Queen of Heaven Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number126044Local AuthorityWest SussexInspection number340902

Inspection dates17–18 November 2009Reporting inspectorWendy Simmons

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school Primary

School category Voluntary aided

Age range of pupils4-11Gender of pupilsMixedNumber of pupils on the school roll322

Appropriate authorityThe governing bodyChairElizabeth HaylerHeadteacherVincent BurkeDate of previous school inspection6 September 2006

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors observed 14 lessons. In addition to these, inspectors visited Reception and Year 1 activities regularly throughout the two inspection days. Meetings were held with the headteacher and staff and with three governors. The lead inspector also met with the consultant headteacher who has been supporting the school. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a variety of documentation, including the school's development plans, assessment information, policies and samples of pupils' English, science and mathematics work. Information about safeguarding was also evaluated. Inspectors received and analysed 72 parental questionnaires.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the capacity to improve as evident in leaders' work and the impact of this to bring about developments in English, mathematics and science
- how well pupils make progress and within this if there is variation in how well different groups of pupils achieve including those with special educational needs, higher-ability pupils and girls
- if there are particular strengths in pupils' personal development
- standards and achievement by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Information about the school

This is a large primary school, which is far more culturally diverse than was evident at the time of the last inspection. Most pupils are from White British or Irish backgrounds and are from the Catholic faith. In addition, the school now takes a high proportion of Muslim pupils, especially from Indian and Pakistani heritages. An increasing proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language. There are more girls than boys in the school. An average proportion of pupils have special educational needs and/or learning disabilities. Pupils' needs most often relate to moderate learning difficulties, behaviour problems or speech and language communication difficulties. Children start the Early Years Foundation Stage in one of the three mixed Reception and Year 1 classes. All other classes are for single age groups except one mixed Year 5/6 class.

The school has been through a challenging time in the last three years. Frequent staffing changes have impacted on the progress and learning for pupils as they moved up through the school. The school is far more settled now following a drive to find suitable new staff. Four newly qualified teachers joined the school in September 2009 and two new middle mangers also took up leadership posts.

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

4

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a notice to improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to the attainment and achievement of pupils.

The attainment of pupils in Year 6 has been stubbornly low for the last three years and pupils' achievement has been significantly lower than expected and is inadequate. As a result of satisfactory leadership and accurate self-evaluation, leaders are correctly concentrating on raising the quality of learning to lift standards and achievement more rapidly. Senior leaders are driving improvements satisfactorily. Middle managers, many of whom are new to their post, are developing their roles well but as yet, they are not involved enough in checking the quality of lessons or in sharing their good practice; this is planned for the Spring term of 2010.

The school has a satisfactory capacity to improve. The impact of leaders' work is most evident in the improving standards and progress for pupils who are currently in the school. For example, attainment in reading is now securely average and pupils of all abilities, including those who are most able, make satisfactory and sometimes good progress in this aspect of their learning. In writing, mathematics and science, the curriculum and teaching are improving but although progress is accelerating, it remains inadequate.

More pupils are currently on track to reach the expected Level 4 in their all subjects in the current Year 6. The trend for improving the higher level attainment at Level 5 is beginning to rise, as evident in the assessment information for pupils currently in Years 4, 5 and 6. However, this is still not fast enough for the school to reach the targets set for this group. The school's most recent tracking information shows pupils' progress, although inadequate, is accelerating but there is significant variation in the progress being made by different groups of learners. In particular, higher-ability pupils are not doing well enough.

Reception and Year 1 children have been in a mixed class since September 2009. The decision to mix these age groups was made to help ensure that there was a smoother transition between the year groups and more opportunities for the development of social skills and play-based learning. Staff are keeping a close eye on the effectiveness of this. The evidence so far, from their monitoring, shows that Year 1 children are not being challenged enough and inspectors' findings confirm this. Plans are underway to improve this but there is still more to do.

Since the start of the autumn term, there have been a number of important changes to the curriculum and teaching. These have evolved due to staff changes, leaders' accurate evaluations and the impact of the work identified on the school's satisfactory improvement plans. As a result, teaching and the curriculum are now satisfactory. Some lessons are good and these are evident from both experienced and newly qualified staff. Pupils have greater opportunities to undertake interesting extended writing and investigative work in mathematics and science. Despite improvements, these remain important areas for development in the drive to lift standards, especially for the most able pupils.

The marking of pupils work is satisfactory and there are examples of good marking, especially in English with some detailed comments about how pupils might develop their skills. However, these useful comments are not always followed up with pupils.

Parents have confidence in the school and recognise it as a welcoming and caring place for pupils to be. The whole-school ethos is one of mutual respect for others. Pupils' spiritual development is good and pupils show respect for other religions. The school works well with parents and the wider community to help them to know about different faiths and cultures; this promotes good community cohesion. Pupils' wider personal development is good, with particular strengths in pupils' outstanding understanding of how to stay safe.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure pupils' achievement and attainment is at least satisfactory by June 2010 in English, mathematics and science, and that that all groups of learners achieve equally well by:
 - giving pupils more opportunities to respond to teachers' marking comments by regularly editing and improving their work
 - increasing the opportunity for more able pupils to investigate challenging activities in mathematics and science
 - making sure that Year 1 pupils are sufficiently challenged.
- Strengthen the leadership still further by:
 - building on the work already started in the improvement plan so that middle mangers are supported to monitor the quality of teaching and learning and share their own good teaching skills.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

4

Children start school with standards that are lower than average. By the end of Year 2, they are broadly average. However, from this point, over the last three years, progress has been inadequate, as standards are too low by the end of Year 6.

Pupils enjoy learning and work hard, so that they are now making faster progress. They appreciate the recent improvements in science and writing and the fact that teachers are making learning more enjoyable and value the new clearer targets to help them to

improve. These are helping pupils to, as they say, 'go higher and higher'. Pupils had great fun exploring materials and change in science when making bread and began to explain the effects of yeast well. Progress and standards in mathematics, while inadequate, are also beginning to improve. Pupils are being taught in ability groups and there is a strong focus on pupils' individual needs and basic skills. Nonetheless, there are limited opportunities to explore real-life problem solving and this is hampering faster progress in mathematics. As a result of the school's evaluations of its work, the assistant headteacher now has more time to help pupils to develop their mathematics skills. An example was seen during the inspection when pupils were given good help to use their ever increasing knowledge of multiplication facts to solve a range of problems and explain their methods.

Leaders recognise the significant variation that persists in the progress made by different groups of learners. Higher-ability pupils are not doing well enough. Pupils with more complex special educational needs and/or disabilities, who receive very particular focused support make satisfactory progress and are generally doing better than other groups of pupils. Nonetheless, pupils with special needs and/ or learning difficulties sometimes miss valuable parts of lessons, which then slows their progress down when they return. The new arrangement for mixing Year 1 with Reception is helping children to gain important social skills. However, the challenges given to Year 1 pupils are not always demanding enough and this group are not doing enough writing, to enable them to achieve well.

Pupils are polite, thoughtful and behave well, and the very good relationships between adults and pupils aid this. Pupils enjoy a wide range of sports and greatly value extra activities, such as growing foods in the allotment, cooking and dance. They contribute well to the community. The quality of art work is very good.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning		
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	4	
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	4	
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3	
The extent to which pupils feel safe		
Pupils' behaviour		
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles		

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	4
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	

How effective is the provision?

The appointment of more staff and the provision of smaller classes are enabling pupils to make better progress. Lesson planning is generally satisfactory, although not always focused precisely on the needs of all pupils. Teachers are making writing tasks interesting and lessons more stimulating. For example pupils argued very persuasively and passionately about why the school site should not be redeveloped into a council recycling site. Here, effective ongoing assessments and focused discussions helped pupils to develop their letter-writing skills and use of descriptive vocabulary. Pupils confirm that they love the new 'Big write' activities. As one said, 'Teachers give us more time to get on by ourselves now and this helps you to think and learn.' Despite this, the most able pupils are not developing their ability to use more complex sentences in their writing. Teachers make effective use of interactive whiteboards and practical resources to help pupils to learn in different ways. The superb computer suite is used well to help pupils to be independent learners, as seen when pupils researched the Jewish faith. The beautiful new library is well stocked and used well by pupils, who have become increasingly motivated to read; this is already beginning to impact on their progress so that it is satisfactory in reading.

Pupils agree that if they are worried there is always someone who will help them. Pupils with behavioural difficulties are well supported, so that the school is calm and behaviour is good. As one pupil put it, 'Since I have had extra help I behave better'. Teaching assistants, now in every class, often give good help.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The use of assessment to support learning	
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	3

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and assistant headteacher have worked closely with a consultant headteacher to enable the school to tighten up their development plans and

organisation. As a consequence, morale is higher and staffing more settled. The leadership team has been restructured with the appointment of new middle managers. All leaders are evaluating the work of the school by checking pupils' progress from assessment information satisfactorily.

Middle management was restructured in September 2009 as several managers were newly appointed to their roles. They have good skills, as evident in the lessons seen. They have conducted an analysis of standards and pupils' progress in the subjects that they are responsible for and fine tuned the school's development plan to enable weaknesses to be addressed. However, middle leaders have not yet had the chance to check the quality of teaching and learning in lessons to strengthen their evaluations of how well initiatives are developing. Equally, they have had limited opportunities to share their good teaching skills with other staff in order to strength the overall quality of teaching in the school.

Leaders are ambitious and enthusiastic to make the school effective. They know that opportunities for pupils are still not consistent, with some weaknesses, particularly in Year 1 provision and in the progress of higher-ability pupils. The opportunity for higher-ability pupils to have more focused support is a new initiative. It is too early to see the full impact of this.

There have been recent changes in the make-up and organisation of the governing body. Governors are increasingly evaluative and proactive. They have made some effective decisions to improve staffing, resources and the learning environment. However, low attainment, over a prolonged period, and inadequate outcomes for pupils means that the school provides inadequate value for money.

Safeguarding procedures are good. The school works well in partnership with families and others and there are good links with outside agencies to ensure that pupils are well cared for. Pupils' and parents' views are highly valued by leaders and there is a strong partnership with others to help pupils to learn. For example, this contributes to pupils' improving reading, their cultural development and in the way that they gain knowledge about healthy and safe lifestyles. The partnership with the visiting consultant headteacher has had a very positive impact on the quality of monitoring and in the way that leaders have developed teaching and improvement planning. Links with other schools have helped the curriculum to be improved.

The school makes sure that everyone learns about different faiths and cultures well. Parents are encouraged to take an active part in sharing their cultural traditions through focus week projects, cookery, dance and special festival work. These events are popular and help the community to respect differences and see similarities in their backgrounds.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3

The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	4
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	4

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children start school with skills and knowledge that are lower than expected; they make steady progress due to satisfactory leadership. By the end of the Reception year children have reached average standards in their personal, physical and creative development and they are broadly as expected in their knowledge of world around them. However, lower attainment is evident in language, communication and mathematics skills and this is why attainment is lower than average overall.

From their questionnaire responses and informal discussions with inspectors, it is clear that parents feel that their children are happy and very well cared for. Inspectors confirm that children benefit from a very warm welcome so that children are happy and settled. Children play well together, behave well and show kindness and respect for others. Teachers plan a suitable range of activities, which gives them a secure understanding of basic skills, such as counting and reading. Although children are learning how to write, too few opportunities are taken to develop this through children's play and investigation in a spontaneous way. The writing areas in the classrooms are uninspiring and do not encourage children to experiment with writing. Teaching is satisfactory and teachers have a sound knowledge of the expectation of the most recent requirements for the Early Years Foundation Stage. The outside learning area is very good and has recently been improved to include a covered, all-weather activity area with a good range of fixed climbing and role play resources. One of the Reception classes does not have the same high quality outside fittings, although plans are in place to rectify this during the coming year.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account: Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

Almost all parents are happy with the school and they greatly value the care given to their children. They agree that their children enjoy school and are very well cared for. Most say that their children make good progress, but a few say that this is not the case and commented that progress in mathematics and science could be better. A few feel that the school does not meet their child's particular needs. Some do, however, comment that pupils with complex needs are well supported. They like the modern facilities. Most, but not all parents are happy with the quality of school leadership and pupils' behaviour and feel staff deal with any unacceptable behaviour well.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Our Lady Queen of Heaven Catholic Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with the 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 72 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 322 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disa	Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	
My child enjoys school	53	74	17	24	2	3	0	0	
The school keeps my child safe	49	68	23	32	0	0	0	0	
The school informs me about my child's progress	38	53	33	46	0	0	0	0	
My child is making enough progress at this school	40	56	25	35	5	7	1	1	
The teaching is good at this school	58	53	31	43	3	4	0	0	
The school helps me to support my child's learning	40	56	28	39	2	3	0	0	
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	34	47	35	49	2	3	0	0	
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	23	32	36	50	3	4	1	1	
The school meets my child's particular needs	37	51	28	39	4	6	0	0	
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	25	35	34	47	3	4	3	4	
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	25	35	38	53	4	6	1	1	
The school is led and managed effectively	26	36	41	57	1	1	3	4	
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	44	61	24	33	3	4	0	0	

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description	
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An oustanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.	
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.	
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.	
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.	

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.
	 The school's capacity for sustained improvement. Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. The quality of teaching. The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



19 November 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Our Lady Queen of Heaven Catholic Primary School, Langley Green, Crawley RH11 7PZ

Thank you so much for welcoming us to your friendly and caring school and for talking to us. We were very interested to hear your views. There are quite a few things that are good in your school but, we judge that your school is not yet as good as it should be so we have given the school a 'notice to improve'.

In the past, many pupils had not made enough progress. The good news is that things are beginning to improve and this is because all of the adults are working hard to help you to learn better. We know that you have noticed how some things have changed and we are delighted that you are trying hard and like your new targets. We especially enjoyed seeing you working so hard in ICT and when making bread. I liked your writing about why your school should never be re-developed as a recycling plant! Teachers are helping you to learn more quickly and we saw several good lessons, which show that the school can improve.

Most of you behave well and know how to live healthy lives. You have a very impressive understanding abut how to be safe in the world around you. You think about your feelings and explore religious beliefs well. Your art work is fantastic and we would like to congratulate you for this. Well done for helping the community.

To make sure that your school improves we have asked your headteacher, governors and other adults to do the following important things:

- improve your progress and skills in English, mathematics and science, especially those of you who find learning easy
- make sure that you do more investigations in mathematics and science
- make sure that you read your teachers' comments when they mark your work and then do what they suggest to improve your writing
- ensure that Year 1 pupils have plenty of challenging things to do, especially as they are now working alongside Reception children
- make sure that teachers share their good ideas with each other so that teaching improves.

Please keep working as hard as you can, especially in 'Big Write', science and

mathematics.

Yours sincerely

Wendy Simmons, Lead inspector

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